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ABSTRACT

The movement towards state-mandated minimum competency testing peaked in 1977-1978. Activity now centers on implementation: most programs will be implemented by 1980-81. To initiate programs, twenty-four states have used the state board approach, 20 enacted legislation, and six have passed both board and legislative mandates. Only Maine, Kansas, and Florida have repealed or modified their programs but court decisions in other states may alter or slow programs. State boards and departments of education are now involving advisory committees, taking care that standard setting is not arbitrary. Departments of education are primarily responsible for test construction or selection, although board approval is necessary. There is a trend toward school district inservice training for test interpretation. States now uniformly test grades 3, 5-6, 8-9, and 9-10, reflecting an emphasis on an early warning system. The diploma sanction, popular in 1975-77, is now less important, partly because states are concerned about litigation. Generally, state legislation mandates testing of basic skills: reading, writing, and arithmetic: boards are more likely to require daily living skills. Less uniformity exists on communication skills. Litigation potential, legislative and board overlap, and politics, make it hard to compare implementation. (State implementation charts are appended). (CP)

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STATE MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTING PROGRAMS:

ANALYSIS OF
STATE MINIMUM COMPETENCY
TESTING PROGRAMS

FOR

THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

FINAL REPORT
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CHRIS PIPHO
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
RESEARCH AND INFORMATION DEPARTMENT
EDUCATION COMMISSION OF THE STATES

Tm 800499

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ANALYSIS OF STATE MINIMUM COMPETENCY TESTING PROGRAMS

The movement towards state-mandated minimum competency testing programs has slowed. By January 1, 1980, 38 states had taken some form of action, an increase of only two states since 1978. The peak years for legislative and state board of education mandates were 1977 and 1978 when 25 states took action.

In 1975, 1976 and 1977 the emphasis was often on creating a test mandate for high school graduation. In 1978 and 1979 only two states took this form of action. The emphasis in the last two years has been increasingly towards creating an "early warning" testing program that would report on student progress as children left elementary, junior high or senior high school. Making better decisions for instructional improvement and remediation seems to be the thrust of recent state policy efforts.

While the high school graduation test requirement is appearing less in the state mandates, it is also being de-emphasized in other ways. Florida's court decision delaying implementation of the high school graduation requirement by four years heads the list. Other changes came in Kentucky where an earlier state board ruling calling for a high school graduation test was superceded by a new law excluding the high school graduation requirement. In Utah a 1980 graduation test deadline was extended for some local school districts and in Connecticut an "early exit" test mandate for high school students was stopped because implementation funds were not appropriated. The Maine legislature originally had included a high school graduation requirement in a one-time test mandate. On the basis of the test scores received and other survey data, the legislature did not extend this testing mandate. It remains to be seen if this movement away from the minimum competency testing requirement for high school graduation will continue or if these state activities are each unique for different reasons. It might even be argued that the Florida court decision did not de-emphasize the graduation mandate but strengthened it by upholding the use of the test for this purpose.

Generally, state activity now centers on the implementation process. State and local school districts, using advisory committees and commissions, are in various stages of identifying instructional goals and objectives to be used for test item specifications, test item writing and field testing and the beginning of full scale test implementation. 1979-80 and 1980-81 will see most of the state and local

district testing programs reach full implementation capability. Changes in the state mandates can be expected as more implementation problems and issues become evident. Court activity may be a crucial factor. The rights of special populations such as handicapped and migrant students may be another factor in changing state programs. The largest unknown probably involves the average student, the average teacher and their day-to-day instructional program. Evaluation of the minimum competency testing program is not called for in most of the mandates but increasingly the question -- "does minimum competency testing make a difference? -- will be asked. How well states and local districts can and cannot answer this question will probably decide the future of minimum competency testing programs.

By Chris Pipho
February 28, 1980

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ANALYSIS OF
STATE MINIMUM COMPETENCY
TESTING PROGRAMS

I. Introduction

The purpose of this analysis is to summarize the legislative and state board action taken by the various states on minimum competency testing. For the purpose of this report, minimum competency testing is defined as any statewide call for minimum competency testing or standards or any call that would permit or give guidance to local school districts in establishing such programs. This definition is broader than the guidelines used by the National Evaluation Systems and does include Colorado, Indiana, Oklahoma and Washington--states not included in their analysis. Since this analysis is an attempt to include all state mandates enacted and not focus solely on implementation of the mandates, the state of Wyoming is also included. After the Request for Proposal for this report was issued, Texas, Arkansas, South Carolina and Illinois have taken action and are included in this analysis, bringing the total to 38 states.

II. Action Taken

Thirty-eight states have taken some form of action to mandate the establishment of minimum competency testing on a statewide basis. State board of education or board of regents' rulings have been used by more states than legislation. Twenty-four states have used the state board approach, while 20 states have enacted legislation. Six states (Arizona, Delaware, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey and Virginia) have passed both legislation and state board of education rulings.

The peak years for this activity were 1977 and 1978. Five states approved legislative bills in 1977 and six states passed legislation in 1978. State board of education activity was highest in 1977, when nine states took action. Five additional states passed state board of education mandates in 1978. Colorado and California did pass laws in 1975, while Oregon's high school graduation rules were first approved in 1972, and Michigan's Assessment Program started in 1969. Arizona enacted a law in 1972 calling for a continuous, uniform evaluation system which does support the minimum competency mandate approved by the board of education in 1976.

In 1979, there were fewer legislative bills and state board resolutions considered and approved. Only Arkansas, Texas and New Jersey passed legislation, and the New York Board of Regents took action by modifying a 1977 decision.

As the 1980 legislative session opened, minimum competency testing bills were alive in Missouri, Nebraska and Ohio. The Missouri bill, HB 1397, would expand the present 8th grade test to 11th grade and add a high school graduation requirement. In Ohio, HB 491 would have local districts adopt minimum achievement standards for pupil promotion and graduation, while the other bill, HB 349, would have the

state board of education adopt these standards. The Nebraska bill, LB 104, would establish a statewide competency test for high school graduation. Two other states will also consider the issue of minimum competency testing in 1980 as the state department of education makes recommendations (Illinois) or reports test data (Kansas) back to the legislature.

In looking back on the state action taken over the past five years, it is evident that the minimum competency testing movement represents a unique reform effort in American education. Very few times, if at all, has an education reform idea swept through so many states in such a short period of time. A decade ago, the educational accountability movement was well accepted by state education policy makers but no more than 32 states took action on this idea and many of the states stopped or modified their action drastically before the program was fully implemented. Educational accountability was initiated by non-educators but many prominent educators (i.e., Leon Lessinger and others), wrote on the topic and can be assigned some responsibility for its implementation in the various states. Minimum competency testing mandates, on the other hand, have not had any predominant educational leadership or support. For the most part, educators have spoken out and written in opposition to the movement. It is probably fair to say that the minimum competency testing movement, supported for the most part by noneducators, has moved through 38 states without any centralized support and no single agency or group of people playing an advocate role.

III. States Modify the Mandates

Repeal or modification of existing programs by the legislature or state board of education has occurred in only a few states. In Maine and Kansas, the legislation called for minimum competency testing programs to be initiated and the results reported back to the state legislature. In Maine, this resulted in a recommendation by the legislative education committees that the state department of education continue to work with school districts and cited no need for a state-mandated minimum competency testing program. In Maine, state assessment was well under way prior to the enactment of the minimum competency testing law and continues to be implemented as a part of an ongoing program of assistance by the state department of education to local school districts. In Kansas, the legislation called for a one-time voluntary test with school districts, and a mandatory test during the 1979-80 school year. In 1980, the legislature will receive the test scores and other information and make a decision on a mandated minimum competency testing program. These are the only two states that have initiated and modified or could modify or stop activity after legislation was enacted, but in both cases, the bills called for this type of review by education policy makers. It is anticipated that some states will conduct legislative reviews of the minimum competency testing programs but no definitive list of these states is available at this writing.

One court case, Debra P. v. Turlington, in Florida, has been decided but the decision did not, in reality, stop the testing program but only delayed the withholding of high school diplomas for a four-year period. This court case is under appeal and could have ramifications in the other states, especially those that are mandating the minimum competency test for high school graduation. As of late 1979, none of the states implementing the high school mandate had modified, changed or stopped their activity as the result of the Debra P. court case. Several states did report that they were studying the court test and were in the process of making modifications regarding implementation and were taking the findings of the court under consideration. However, they did not view the Florida court case as being responsible for any major changes in their state. In Nevada, one state official announced that the state department of education was working on procedures that would give better notification to students and parents and a clarification of the general procedures for implementing the minimum competency test. This official said they were studying the court test and felt that it would give them some assistance in making these changes. In no case has any state completely stopped a minimum competency testing program as a result of the first court test. It is expected, however, that other court tests will be forthcoming and the possibility always exists that the minimum competency testing movement could be altered or slowed drastically by a series of court decisions. Most state departments of education are quite concerned about the potential of litigation and appear to be documenting many of their implementation steps as a precautionary measure. Most of the early state action centered around the high school graduation diploma and a minimum competency test as a requirement for graduation. In Florida and California, the "early-exit" examination idea was implemented early in 1976. No other states have adopted this early-exit testing idea.

Beginning in 1977-78, a greater number of states considered and adopted testing programs that included both elementary and junior high school students. In 1978-79, no states enacted just a high school graduation mandate. The New Jersey legislation in 1979 did address only this point, but the bill was to expand the existing legislation and state board mandates by adding the high school graduation mandate. In Kentucky, the legislature did pass a bill in 1978 that reversed an earlier state board ruling concerning high school graduation. The latest law does not permit the use of a test for graduation purposes in Kentucky.

Generally, the minimum competency testing movement has been accepted more widely in the Western, Southern and Eastern portions of the country and primarily in states that had a history of strong central state control over education. Throughout the Midwest, the notion of a strong minimum competency testing program has not been accepted well. Only in Kansas and Illinois has legislation been enacted, but in both of these cases, it calls for a study or for a one- or two-year pilot testing program. In Nebraska and Missouri, legislation

calls for a voluntary testing program, and in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa, the issue has been studied by the state board, a task force and state superintendents and rejected.

A summary of state action taken and the year it was enacted or approved can be found in Table I.

Table I - State Action on Minimum Competency Testing

<u>State Legislation</u>		<u>State Board of Education</u>	
Arizona*	1972	Arizona*	1971 and 1976
Arkansas	1979	Alabama	1977
California	1975 and 1977	Delaware*	1976
Colorado	1975	Georgia	1977 and 1978
Connecticut	1978	Idaho	1977
Delaware*	1978	Indiana	1978
Florida	1976	Maryland*	1977 and 1978
Illinois	1978	Massachusetts	1978
Kansas	1978	Michigan	1969
Kentucky	1978	Missouri	1976 and 1978
Louisiana	1977	Nebraska**	1975
Maine	1977	Nevada	1978
Maryland*	1977	New Hampshire**	1977
Nevada*	1977	New Mexico	1976
New Jersey*	1976 and 1979	New Jersey*	1976
North Carolina	1977	New York	1977 and 1979
South Carolina	1978	Oklahoma	1978
Texas	1979	Oregon	1972 and 1976
Virginia*	1976 and 1978	Rhode Island	1978
Washington	1976	Tennessee	1977
		Utah	1977
		Virginia*	1978
		Vermont	1977
		Wyoming	1977

Footnotes next page.

*Both Legislation and State Board of Education Ruling

Arizona: Legislation, 1972; state board, 1971 and 1976

Delaware: Legislation, 1978; state board, 1976

Maryland: Legislation, 1977; state board, 1977 and 1978

Nevada: Legislation, 1977; state board, 1978

New Jersey: Legislation, 1976 and 1979; state board 1976

Virginia: Legislation, 1976 and 1978; state board, 1978

**Nebraska and New Hampshire activities were apparently initiated by state department (commissioner or superintendent) and presumed to have later been endorsed or approved by the state board of education.

IV. Responsibility for Setting Minimum Competency Test Standards

The process of setting standards for the test is one aspect of minimum competency testing least likely to receive detailed treatment in the law or state board ruling. Typically, the mandate calls for the state board of education, state department of education or local districts to "establish standards" (cut-off scores) to be used with the minimum competency test. To a certain extent, it can be said that the bill drafters, state board members or involved policy makers probably do not have a good technical understanding of the steps involved in this process. This may be the reason why the mandate seldom mentions the process in detail but merely assigns responsibility to either local districts or to the state. Noneducator policy makers quite often assume that standards are an integral part of the education testing process. A teacher grading a paper or test, they reason, is making use of standards. Since this process is presumably a part of the day-to-day procedures used in the classroom or a school, policy makers quite often do not understand educators' hesitancy to set standards on a minimum competency test. Some legislators have even said that they thought the standards were set by the test makers, i.e., a 70-percent correct response rate means pass and something less than that means failure. While they concede that a teacher might arbitrarily assign these grades, they fail to understand that the standard-setting process is a subjective procedure carried out either by one individual or a group of people. In general, state policy makers have a difficult time trying to understand why setting a test standard is such a difficult process. One legislator said during a hearing on a bill, "This is what we pay you for -- to make the hard decisions. Aren't you as an educator trained to make these kinds of decisions?" Educators, on the other hand, have been heard to say, "I don't want to play God." They were very reluctant to take the lives of their students in their hands and set a test cut-off score which might brand a student for life as an incompetent or competent when later on the results of this test might not mean very much in terms of success in life. One Colorado ex-legislator and a practicing educator testified at a committee hearing in Colorado that a standard or cut-off score could identify the wrong people. He gave an example of two students that he had in a ninth-grade civics class nearly ten years earlier, and said that one of the students would have easily passed a minimum competency test and the other would have failed the test. He went on to elaborate that he had personal contact with both individuals just recently, only to discover that the individual who probably would have failed the test was now a successful businessman, active in civic and community affairs, while the other individual was currently under indictment for bank robbery.

Generally, it can be said that there is a better understanding of the test standard-setting process in 1979 than there was in 1975 and 1976 when the first minimum competency testing bills were introduced. States now are involving more people in the process of setting test standards, taking more care that the process is not an arbitrary one

carried out by a small number of people. In Connecticut, for example, the State Department of Education is in the process of setting test standards for local school districts to use in the various subject area tests. They have involved educators and lay citizens to a great extent. One of these committees has met more than 20 times in the past year, assisting the state department in the technical procedure of establishing standards. This degree of involvement and the sheer amount of time being used to set standards was not always the case in the early days of minimum competency testing. Some of the earlier testing mandates called for the selection of the tests, setting of the cut-off scores and the implementation of the whole testing program in six months. The short amount of time, the lack of involvement on the part of educators and lay citizens resulted in the test standard being established and recommended to the state board for approval by a very small number of educators within the state department.

In practice, the setting of standards is not often accomplished by the state board of education except through its official function of approving recommendations made by the state department of education. On the other hand, when the state mandate calls for the department of education to set standards, it is quite likely that the state board will be called upon to endorse the activity. In practice, it is difficult to determine where the state board of education and the state department of education functions begin and end.

It would appear that most states have made use of advisory committees, task forces or other groups to assist with the setting of test standards. In some states -- Idaho, Indiana, New York and New Hampshire, for example -- the statewide committee is named in the mandate. In states where these groups have not been named in the mandate, use of the advisory committees ranges from a large "blue ribbon" commission (Alabama's Committee of 100), to the use of existing advisory committees.

In at least three states -- Oklahoma, Maine and Michigan -- no standards are called for in the mandate. These states, however, do not differ greatly from the states where local districts have the option to set standards. There is a difference, however, among the states where the state mandate calls for each local district to set the test standards (California, for example) or where local districts have the option (Nebraska) to set test standards. The distinction between these states, in some cases, depends upon who is interpreting the mandate. The whole issue of test standard-setting is not clear and generalizations cannot be easily made. Litigation will probably contribute to the feeling that test standard-setting will not be easy. Many of the state departments of education are reluctant to discuss the complete test standard-setting process unless officially asked to divulge all steps, names and dates in the process. Many individuals feel that divulging this kind of information to a variety of legal

aid societies, political pressure groups and other individuals could hasten a lawsuit against the minimum competency testing program. State departments of education say that they are documenting their procedures better now than they did several years ago. Obtaining definitive information on the test standard-setting process is still a difficult undertaking. The mood in most states seems to be "we need to identify and use a defensible method of setting standards."

A state-by-state summary of the standards-setting process, the requirements found in the state mandates, is included in Table II.

Table II
Responsibility for Setting Minimum Competency Test Standards

Alabama	- State Department of Education with approval of State Board
Arkansas	- State Board
Arizona	- Local districts (mandatory)
California	- Local districts (mandatory)
Colorado	- Local districts (all portions of law optional)
Connecticut	- Local districts (optional)
Delaware	- State Department of Education
Florida	- State Board
Georgia	- State Board and State Department of Education
Idaho	- State Board, State Department of Education and Steering Committee
Illinois	- Local districts with State Board (optional, depending on state plan)
Indiana	- Local districts with local advisory committee
Kansas	- State Board
Kentucky	- Local district (optional - part of state plan)
Louisiana	- State Department with State Board
Maine	- No standards
Maryland	- State Board and State Department of Education
Massachusetts	- Local districts (optional)
Michigan	- No standards
Missouri	- State Department of Education
Nebraska	- Local districts (optional)
Nevada	- State Board
New Hampshire	- State Department of Education with State Board
New Jersey	- State Board with legislative review
New Mexico	- State Department of Education with State Board
New York	- Board of Regents with statewide committee
North Carolina	- Elementary - no standards Secondary - State Board and statewide commission
Oklahoma	- No standards
Oregon	- Local districts (mandatory)
Rhode Island	- Board of Regents after baseline data is gathered
South Carolina	- State Board
Tennessee	- Elementary - local districts. Secondary - State Board
Texas	- Standards not mentioned in law, but are implied
Utah	- Local districts
Vermont	- State Board
Virginia	- State - reading and math. Local districts - essential citizenship skills
Washington	- Local districts (optional)
Wyoming	- Local districts (mandatory)

V. Responsibility for Writing or Selecting the Test

As with the setting of test standards, writing or selecting the test becomes in practice something different than the mandate would indicate. Again, the role of the state board of education and the state department of education blend together and in reality the staff of the state department of education probably carries most of the responsibility for writing or selecting the test. From a legal point of view, however, the sign-off by the chief state school officer and the approval by the state board of education are all important functions.

Many of the state agencies are using commercial testing companies or colleges and universities to help with the test selection and writing process. In some instances, these contracts call for the writing of the test and in other instances, the independent contractors carry out only certain functions such as needs assessment, preparation of goal and objective statements, or the writing of the first draft of test items on up to a preparation of the total test. Generally, state departments of education are spending more time on the writing of test item specifications and are becoming more sophisticated in their understanding and use of the needs assessment, goal and objective statements in the preparation of the test items. Early in this movement, the selecting and writing of a test was often accomplished in a matter of a few months. Today it seems to be general knowledge that this process should take one, two or even three years.

Information was requested from the states on the process of preparing and selecting the test. Generally, the information received was less than adequate. Several reasons probably are responsible for this lack of good information on the test writing, test selection process. In many states, the implementation process calls for a task force or a variety of state committees to assist in the selection of the goal and objective statements, the writing of the test item specifications and the preparation of the test. Quite often, states find that the original implementation schedule did not allow for enough time. They found that certain steps in the test development process take more time than others. The process is further complicated by getting the field test items out, back and scored, making decisions, calling additional staff meetings and task force meetings, all of which take more time than was originally anticipated. In some instances, state departments have changed contractors in this process. While states can release the original implementation plan, this is usually not the one in use and all changes would be difficult to document. Requesting information on contracts with commercial test companies and the extent to which private contractors are used also produces a motley assortment of information. State departments of education are reluctant to discuss many of these implementation details as information gathered for research purposes often finds its way back to the sales representatives for testing companies. Satisfaction or dissatisfaction with a given testing corporation or the hint

that a potential change may come in a contract within the next few months can always result in a great deal of commercial pressure on state departments and state boards of education. Listing commercial companies that are currently under contract to states or listing those companies that were formerly under contract with the state and have now lost a contract amounts to an endorsement or indictment of a commercial test company. States are reluctant to release information or research data that could be used commercially. Another issue which seems to be related is the conflict of interest between many test companies and individual state departments of education or local school district employees. Most state departments of education have a formal procedure for releasing employees for a certain number of days of professional consulting within a year and these arrangements between existing testing companies and the state department of education officials probably represent another web of activities surrounding the implementation of minimum competency testing.

Perhaps only one state, Massachusetts, has had to deal with all levels of writing or selecting a test. This secondary school state mandate calls for local districts to use a state-developed test, purchase a commercial test, or write their own test. All of these must conform to statewide criteria. Using the statewide screening committee of 24 members, the state department of education in Massachusetts has developed criteria describing how various commercial tests meet the state guidelines and set out a process that local districts can use to review commercial tests. Commercial test company interest in this process was very high. The 69-page report prepared by the Massachusetts Department of Education is titled: "Development and Application of Criteria for Screening Commercial Standardized Tests." This appears to be the only state that has actually written criteria for local districts to use in selecting the commercial tests the district wishes to purchase. In other states, the department of education may assist local school districts such as California, where sample goal statements and sample test items have been prepared and inservice programs prepared for local districts on down to just a state mandate assigning responsibility to local school districts.

In general, most minimum competency testing programs call for or imply a criterion-referenced test. Arizona's mandate seems to imply the use of a norm-referenced test when it calls for a specific grade level of achievement for high school graduation and eighth-grade promotion. North Carolina calls for the use of a norm-referenced test at grades 3, 6 and 9 and a criterion-referenced test at grades 1 and 2.

In the most recent poll of state departments of education conducted for this analysis, state officials are saying that local school districts are requesting more inservice training from state departments of education on large-scale assessment. Generally, the state

officials are finding that local school districts, teachers and administrators have not had sufficient college training or inservice training on the differences between criterion- and norm-referenced tests, the general process of writing these tests and, in turn, the use of these tests in modifying or changing the instructional program. Some states are saying that this need for inservice training is becoming critical as first-, second- and third-year test results are returned to local school districts and the state. State officials are saying that better coordination between testing specialists and subject matter specialists is needed at the state level and at the local school district level. Other states are saying that the need for better information on preparing and reporting test results to the media and press is needed. Some states are saying that the analysis of test results is a need both at the state and the local school district level. Most local school district officials concede that teachers, building-level administrators and others have not used existing test data for instructional decision making. This weakness has also been quite evident with minimum competency testing programs. Apart from deciding which student receives a high school diploma or fails, school districts and state departments have not made extensive use of the test data. Better procedures for using the test information, for making comparative decisions within a school district and within a state are needed.

The distinction between those states mandating a state standard and a state test and those calling for a local standard and a local test is not as "clean cut" an issue as the mandates would indicate. Nine of the states call for local district test standards and locally developed tests. But, even in these states, the activity would have to be footnoted because the Massachusetts State Department has to develop a secondary level test, but use by the districts is optional. Nebraska, with variation, also fits this description. California, on the other hand, prepares sample test items but leaves the total process to local school districts. In Florida, the first eleventh-grade test was prepared primarily by the state with local school district input and commercial test company assistance. The state department is now preparing test item specifications for the next round of testing and educator involvement appears to have increased. Even when a state mandate calls for a state test and a state test standard, local district involvement is always used and generally appears to be on the increase as states strive to give as much local ownership to the process as possible. In states where the mandate was passed on to local school districts, state departments are hearing a call for more direction from the state department of education. These state departments then have to sort out the difference between giving more direction and stopping short of a call for a state mandate. In some states, administrators are saying, "Give us more 'teeth', more mandates," while teachers want more assistance with remedial programs. Some state officials are saying they are caught between all of these forces including the policy makers (legislators and state board

members), who also have an interest that needs to be served.

In general, the test writing and selection process appears to be moving towards more local district involvement, especially in the states with a state mandate. In the states where the mandate calls for local district involvement, it appears to be a call on the part of local districts for more state assistance. In summary, the movement is using greater involvement of both state and local school district people in the selection and writing of the test. Some states are saying that, once the test has been selected and the initial field testing and assessment process begun, the real issue is how the test results will be used and interpreted to the state and to educators. This brings out a call for more inservice training, especially in the area of scoring of writing samples and planning of remedial programs.

A summary of state responsibility for writing and selecting the tests can be found in Table III.

Table III - Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test

Alabama	-State Department and State Board with advisory committee
Arkansas	-State Department and State Board
Arizona	-Local districts
California	-Local districts
Colorado	-Local district option (note: local districts do not have to implement any program)
Connecticut	-Local districts - optional
Delaware	-State Department
Florida	-State Department
Georgia	-State Department and pilot school districts
Idaho	-State Board, State Department and steering committee
Illinois	-(state and local districts have two years to make decision)
Indiana	-Local districts
Kansas	-State Board and State Department
Kentucky	-State Department
Louisiana	-State Superintendent with State Board
Maine	-State Superintendent with statewide committee
Maryland	-State Department of Education
Massachusetts	-Local districts
Michigan	-State Department
Missouri	-State Department
Nebraska	-State Department
Nevada	-State Board with State Department
New Hampshire	-Local districts
New Jersey	-State Department with statewide committee
New Mexico	-Elementary - local districts. Secondary - State Department
New York	-Board of Regents with statewide committee
North Carolina	-State Department with statewide committee
Oklahoma	-State Department
Oregon	-Local districts
Rhode Island	-State Department
South Carolina	-State Department
Tennessee	-Elementary - local districts. Secondary - State Board
Texas	-State Department
Utah	-Local districts
Vermont	-Local districts
Virginia	-State Department and local districts
Washington	-Local districts
Wyoming	-Local districts

VI. Grade Areas to be Assessed

A great deal of uniformity exists on when the minimum competency test is to be given. In the elementary school, the most-used starting point is third grade. Later elementary (grades 5 or 6) is also popular, with grades 8 and 9 used more often than grades 10 and 11. Generally, there is a trend toward starting the high school graduation test at the beginning of high school, grade 9 or 10. This movement may be related to the recommendations made by legal analysis experts who are calling for an adequate phase-in time for the high school graduation mandates. Since 1975, there has been a trend toward making the minimum competency testing program an "early warning" system for identification of individual students needing remedial assistance. Complete implementation of this approach may alter the need for remedial programs at the secondary level. Some state officials are speculating that an immense backlog of remedial assistance needs currently exists in the secondary schools and that this need will decrease as elementary students are subjected to minimum competency testing and remedial programs. This assumption, if it proves to be correct, will support the critics of education in their claim that schools have, in fact, promoted incompetent students.

At the elementary level, South Carolina is the only state to mandate a test for preschool children, while North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia call for testing in grade 1. While most educators support the notion of starting the minimum competency test in early elementary school (perhaps grade 3), most are skeptical of mandating a test of minimum competency at the preschool, kindergarten or first grade level. They do not feel that the test can adequately measure minimum skills before all of the reading skills are mastered.

Delaware and Missouri are the only states to test at only one grade level, while Arizona, Maine and Texas test at only two grade levels. The most-used combinations appear to be grades 3, 6, 9 and 12 or grades 4, 6, 8 and 11, with an effort to begin testing at the end of elementary school, once in junior high school and again once before high school graduation.

A summary of information on grade levels to be assessed can be found in Table IV.

Table IV - Grade Areas to be Assessed

State	Pre Sch	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Other
Alabama					X			X			X				
Arkansas					X			X		X					
Arizona										X				X	
Calif.						X	X	X				X	X	X	once in elem. twice in sec. sec. at dis- trict option
Colorado															
Conn.					X		X		X		X				
Delaware													X		
Florida					X		X			X			X		
Georgia						X				X		X	X		
Idaho											X	X	X	X	
Illinois															under study
Indiana					X			X		X		X			
Kansas				X		X		X		X			X		
Kentucky					X		X		X			X			
Louisiana						X				X			X		
Maine										X			X		one time only
Maryland									X		X			X	
Mass.															local option
Michigan						X			X			X			
Missouri										X					
Nebraska							X								
Nevada					X			X			X			X	

Table IV - Grade Areas to be Assessed
(Continued)

State	Pre Sch	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Other
New Hamp.						X				X				X	
New Jersey					X			X			X		X		
New Mexico											X	X			elementary: local option
New York					X			X		X	X		X	X	
North Car.			X	X	X			X			X		X		
Oklahoma					X			X			X			X	
Oregon															secondary: dist. option
Rhode Is.						X		X		X		X			
South Car.	X		X	X	X			X		X			X		
Tennessee						X	X	X		X					
Texas							X				X				
Utah															local dis- trict option
Vermont															continuous
Virginia		X									X				
Washington						X				X					
Wyoming															district option

VII. Skill Areas to be Assessed

Reading, writing and mathematics are the most often selected subject areas for minimum competency testing mandates. Generally, state legislative mandates call for school skill testing in the 3 R's, while state boards of education are more likely to have a competency requirement in the life skills and survival skills or the application of basic skills. Thirty-two states list reading in their mandates, but analyzing the intent of the legislation or state board ruling, it is fair to assume that reading is or will be a part of each state mandate. In the area of communication skills -- writing, spelling, speaking, listening and language arts -- less uniformity exists. While 20 states do mention writing in their state mandates, the law or state board ruling doesn't usually specify whether the writing test will be based on a multiple-choice examination or an open-writing sample. Generally, there appears to be a trend toward requiring an open-writing sample, but this practice creates additional inservice needs and other implementation problems. Most of the states that have implemented an open-writing sample agree that they do have inservice problems with the holistic scoring procedure. Generally, states say they have created an inservice program for training at least one individual in each school district in this method of scoring, but find that they have a constant need to offer retraining for local school districts. Local districts, in turn need statewide assistance or some technical assistance with replicating the holistic scoring inservice training program at the local district level. Usually states are saying that they have not been able to get very much assistance from the colleges or universities within their state. There is rather uniform agreement that language arts and English teachers have not been trained in conducting this scoring process.

In the area of mathematics, there appears to be rather uniform agreement on the four basic functions of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division as a requirement for the minimum standard in arithmetic or mathematics. However, the use of the word "application" or the development of the test which applies some of the basic skills to life areas has created problems of implementation for state departments of education.

Moving beyond the reading, writing and arithmetic list of skills, Nebraska and Vermont have tried to take separate approaches to identifying those skills that students would need in order to continue the learning process. In Nebraska, the skills have been called essential learning skills. An attempt has been made to identify the reading, writing and arithmetic skills that are essential for continued learning. In Vermont, the state mandate calls for testing in reading, writing, speaking, listening, mathematics and reasoning. An attempt is made to identify the competencies that will be useful for continued learning. In the area of reasoning, they have identified

the areas of problem solving, classifying and organizing material, making reason judgments and research skills as the competencies under the area of reasoning that need to be taught and tested. In order to assist teachers in school districts, the state department of education has completed a document entitled "The Teacher's Guide for Basic Competencies in Reasoning."

A summary of the subject areas included in the state mandates can be found in Table V.

Table V - Skill Areas to be Assessed

<u>Reading</u>			<u>Writing</u>		<u>Spelling</u>	<u>Speak- ing</u>	<u>Listen- ing</u>	<u>Language Arts</u>
AL	KY	OR	AL	NE	ID	UT	UT	CT
AZ	LA	RI	AZ	NV	IN	VT	VT	KY
AR	ME	SC	CA	NM	KY			MD
CA	MD	TN	DE	NY	TN			RI
CT	MA	TX	FL	OR				TX
DE	MI	UT	ID	SC				WA
FL	MO	VT	IN	TX				
GA	NE	VA	KY	UT				
ID	NV	WA	ME	VT				
IN	NY	WY	MA	WY				
KS	OK							

<u>Math</u>			<u>Arithmetic</u>	<u>Computation</u>	<u>Application Skills</u>	<u>Problem Solving</u>
AL	LA	RI	ID	AZ	DE	UT
AR	ME	SC	LA	CA	MO	
CA	MA	TN	UT	LA	NM	
CT	MI	TX		NJ		
DE	MO	VT		OR		
FL	NE	VA		UT		
GA	NV	WA		WY		
KS	NH	WY				
KY	NY					

OTHER

AZ - written communicative skills
 CA - consumer economics
 GA - career development
 IN - composition
 LA - communication
 MD - see state summary
 MO - governance/economics
 NH - communications
 NY - reading comprehension
 OR - life skills
 RI - comprehension, analysis, life skills, cultural arts
 TN - grammar
 UT - governance, consumerism
 VT - reasoning
 VA - communications
 WY - government/free enterprise

VIII. Use of the Standards and Tests

When the minimum competency testing movement started, its first thrust was to establish a minimum test standard for the high school diploma. In 1975-76 it appeared that the sole thrust of the movement would center around the high school diploma, but gradually both educators and state policy makers expanded their thinking to include other grade levels and other purposes. Essentially, people were asking the question, "How can we apply a test standard only to the high school diploma when the problem of low standards in the basic skill areas and with student achievement probably starts much earlier?" This assumption was coupled with the feeling that a test and a standard late in a high school career was more a punishment of the student than it was the school or the instructional program. Some people argue that the standard should be applied to both the students and the school; others argue that it should be applied just to the school. In 1979, the New York Board of Regents became one of the few states to apply this thinking to a school building. The requirement in New York calls for 75 percent of the students in a given building to pass the minimum competency test or the building would receive an accreditation warning and eventually lose state accreditation.

In 1977 there appeared to be more writing on the subject of minimum competency testing, more conferences held and, as a result of this dialogue, state mandates were broadened out to include testing at the elementary and junior high level in addition to the high school students. At approximately the same time, several individuals concerned with the legal analysis of the movement began making recommendations that states consider adequate phase-in time, and that due-process procedures allow for more careful planning and adequate notice of the testing program and its requirements to all students. This tended to also broaden the thrust of the minimum competency testing movement. Generally, states added a minimum test standard and test at all three grade levels including high school graduation. The mood to broaden the mandates also included additional emphasis on using the minimum competency test for the identification of students needing remedial assistance. Many of the state mandates started calling for local districts to submit a plan as to how they would handle the state mandate that local school districts initiate a standard and a test. In several states the movement was associated directly with accountability and other aspects of instruction and school improvement were included along with the minimum competency testing mandate. In some states, the ongoing assessment program was broadened to include some concepts of minimum competency testing. This occurred in Rhode Island and Michigan.

Grade-to-grade promotion based on a competency test standard was a topic of debate in several states during 1975-76, but no state has

ever enacted a mandate calling for a minimum competency test standard at each grade level. The California Legislature had a bill introduced each year since 1977 calling for students to read at a given grade level before being promoted to the next grade level. This idea was never enacted in California but it did influence the inclusion of a competency test standard for elementary school students in the Finance Act, AB 65, in 1978. The idea that students should be able to read at a given grade level before being promoted to the next grade has never been widely accepted among state policy makers or educators. While the mandate for high school graduation was easily accepted, the notion that every grade needs a standard before being promoted to the next grade has not caught on in most of the states. Only four states have some requirement concerning grade-to-grade promotion, but a high degree of local option is given in most states. The Arizona mandate applies only to eighth grade, and Florida schools must submit a plan as to how they will handle promotion and retention. In Virginia, schools may hold a student back at a grade level only once between grades 2 and 7. The remainder of the time they must offer remedial assistance.

Generally it can be said that standards for high school graduation remain popular among legislators and some state board members. However, the idea has moved from just high school graduation on to an early warning system and a basic skills improvement thrust. No new states have added just the high school graduation mandate in either 1979 or 1978. Achievement in the basic skills appears to best summarize the thrust of the minimum competency movement at the beginning of the 1980s.

A summary of the use of the standard and test can be found in Table VI.

Table VI - Use of Standard and Test

A. For High School Graduation

Alabama - class of 1981	New York - class of 1980
Arizona - class of 1976	North Carolina - class of 1980
California - class of 1980	Oregon - class of 1978
Delaware - class of 1981	Tennessee - class of 1982
*Florida - class of 1979	*Utah - class of 1980
Idaho - class of 1982 (dist. opt.)	Vermont - class of 1981
Maryland - class of 1982	Virginia - class of 1981
Nevada - class of 1982	Wyoming - (no class given)
New Mexico - class of 1981	
(proficiency endorsement)	

B. For Grade Promotion

Arizona - 8th grade
California - for grade promotion decision at local district level
Florida - local district plan for grade promotion to take in consideration test
Virginia - Grades 1-7

C. Instructional Improvement and Remediation

Arkansas	Louisiana	Nevada	Rhode Island
California	Massachusetts	New Hampshire	South Carolina
Connecticut	Michigan	New Jersey	Tennessee
Indiana	Missouri	New York	Texas
Kentucky	Nebraska	North Carolina	Washington

D. Other

Georgia - under study
Illinois - under study
Kansas - legislature will decide in 1981
Maine - for legislative study
Oklahoma - planning and comparison by state and local officials

*Florida and Utah have extended the effective date of the high school graduation requirement.

IX. The Implementation of State Minimum Competency Testing Mandates

Comparing minimum competency testing implementation procedures used by states and school districts is a difficult task. There does not appear to be any distinct set of activities unique to the states that have passed the mandate to local school districts nor is there any identifiable set of activities surrounding the state implementation of the programs. Generally, both states and local school districts have carried on some phase of needs assessment in which various audiences are used to help identify the skills that are listed under reading, writing and arithmetic. This is ordinarily followed by some elaboration of these goal areas so that test item specifications can be written. Following this step either the subcontractor, commercial test company or the staff of either the local district or the state proceeds to write sample test items. At this stage, some of the implementation programs go to immediate full-scale field testing, others do field testing on individual items and then eventually put the test together for a trial run. Other states and school districts will duplicate the sample test one or more times while others do it only once. Many of the variables present in the implementation process to some extent hinge on the time line specified in the original mandate, the manpower available at the state department of education, the amount of money budgeted for the process and the number of grade levels or subject areas to be handled. Life skills, application of the basic skills and other steps dealing with application of the basic skills usually add more time and more steps to the process.

In California and Massachusetts, the state departments of education have initiated detailed procedures to assist local school districts with the implementation of state mandates. The California mandate calling for sample goal statements and sample test items to be released to school districts prior to schedule-setting standards and selecting the test at the local district level have resulted in a larger scale effort than most states have been able to use. Several volumes of implementation material have been developed and approximately 18 professional staff people have been assigned to this process within the California Department of Education. In Massachusetts, more options are left with the local school districts. The state department has spent a considerable amount of time with statewide teacher and educator task forces, and has assisted in the process of writing of a test at the local district level or state level. In some ways, it is probably fair to assume that the resources, size and past history of the state departments of education may play a greater role in the implementation of minimum competency testing mandates than the actual law or state board of education ruling would indicate.

Attempts at constructing a taxonomy or implementation matrix that would fit all of the states were unsuccessful. Variations of the implementation steps in states appear to be in a great state of flux. While many of the state departments of education said that the Debra P. v. Turlington court case did not change any of their implementation

procedures and that they were only studying the court test, it is evident that a variety of forces, including the threat of a potential court test, is having influence on the implementation procedures. Time schedules that were clearly laid out early in the implementation stages now appear to be moving or are being softened. In Alabama, for example, the department of education points out that while the state mandate calls for high school graduation tests to be in place by 1981, the original words say that it is not to be implemented before 1981. This is being interpreted as an approximate date or an initial date, and that the mandate does not prohibit the state department from prolonging that implementation deadline if the situation so dictates. A similar delay of the mandate is evident also in Nevada, where some individual school districts, for reasons known only to the state department of education and those school districts, have been given a deadline delay. The potential of litigation has many state agencies using more educators and lay citizen input, and they are apparently documenting the stages of implementation in greater detail. In California, the state department of education is conducting a rather elaborate study of the needs of local school districts as they implement the minimum competency test mandate. This information will be available later in 1980, and should give assistance to the state department in determining the kinds of assistance to be given to local school districts. In other parts of the country where the mandate calls for local districts to take action, local school boards are studying the need for their own policy statements in regard to the implementation stages. Most local school boards have not adopted any policy outside of the state policy that has been handed down to them. In other cases, local school districts have had to modify their own policy in regard to testing after a state board mandate was enacted. Generally, the spectre of litigation at the local level is a possibility and many local school districts working on their own testing standards have concern that they would be better off using a commercial test so they would not be carrying the complete responsibility for a court judgment. There is a movement in the states where local districts carry the responsibility toward more state responsibility and state control. Local school districts do not envision this as a request for more state mandates but merely more state direction. One of the more obvious concerns of local school districts is the mobility of students from one school district to another, and the fact that local districts could be implementing very different procedures and processes. This in itself could result in litigation from students or classes of students.

State departments of education are identifying a wide variety of inservice needs in local school districts. Some of these are:

- (1) the process of conducting a needs assessment at the local district level,
- (2) coordination of remedial programs between subject areas,
- (3) interpreting test results at classroom level,
- (4) monitoring student progress from one grade to another, and
- (5) incorporating the

minimum competency testing results into the total curriculum and instruction program. In some states, the inservice needs extend into the state department of education itself. The coordination of testing and curriculum specialization at the state level is called for as school districts get into the second and third year of pilot testing or full-scale testing. One of the overriding questions is what to do with the student who needs remedial assistance, gets the assistance, but doesn't pass the test. In Florida, the legislature has enacted a new law called the Thirteenth Year Program in which students will be able to stay in school one year longer in order to satisfactorily complete all the requirements. This process is also putting pressure on other state-related programs in adult education, vocational education and career education. Generally, the states see that they will eventually have to permit the students at any time in their lifetime to take the minimum competency test if they do not pass it while they are in high school. This mandate calling for a minimum competency test for high school graduation in effect extends and creates a whole new adult education market. While the implementation process carries with it all the problems so far identified, governors in at least two states -- Texas and Alabama -- see a need to move to a statewide curriculum and to narrow the focus of the public schools if achievement levels are to be raised and costs are to be contained within some identifiable limits. In Texas, the governor has stated on several occasions that a single text series would probably best fit this need. In Alabama, the governor has called for a war on illiteracy, and is calling for local school districts and the state to identify specific goals and objectives by subject areas that will apply to all schools within the state. In both instances, the intent is to raise achievement in the basic skill areas and to help all students. The process may, however, have a narrowing effect on the instructional program and, as many educators have said, make minimums the maximums.

The political nature of the minimum competency testing movement is another factor influencing the implementation process. Because many of the mandates were opposed by the same educators who are now charged with implementation, probing questions on the implementation process are sometimes coolly received. This fact, combined with separate and overlapping laws and state board rulings, makes interpretation of the implementation process difficult for state officials who want to provide information. All of this, coupled with the possibility that litigation could arise at any time, makes gathering information on the implementation process at best a tentative procedure.

X. The status of handicapped and other special groups of students under state minimum competency testing programs is in a state of involvement.

Only about half of the states have made special provisions or mention handicapped students in their minimum competency testing mandates. Ten states exempt handicapped students from the minimum competency test. Four additional states -- South Carolina, Georgia, Massachusetts and Missouri -- will use the student Individual Education Plan (IEP) to determine if a student takes the test or is excluded. Three states -- Connecticut, New York and Nevada -- permit local districts to make their own decision on handicapped, and Arizona permits local districts to award a special diploma to handicapped.

In 17 states, there is no mention of special populations in the state mandate. This probably does not mean that states want handicapped students to take the test but should be interpreted only as "no action" taken.

Washington is the only state to exempt Title I and migrant students from the state test. The status of migrant students is an area where additional information is needed. It is presumed that migrant students enrolled in a regular school program would take all state tests mandated. More information on the status of this special group of students needs to be collected.

In many of the states, where no mention is made of special students, the issue is under study. These studies in some cases have broadened out to include a better understanding of the implementation of P.L. 94-142 and the fit of state goals and objectives to handicapped students. The Individual Education Plan (IEP) provisions for mainstreaming and the difficulty in making a single decision fit all classes of handicapped appear to be the reasons why states cannot make a single decision to include or exclude special students. Increasingly states are considering the option of having individual school districts use the IEP as the decision point of inclusion or exclusion.

STATE ACTIVITY CHARTS

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Alabama	State Board of Education Resolution adopted April 27, 1977.	The state department of education with approval of the state board of education. Recommendations on the standards are to come from the Committee of 100 appointed by the state superintendent of education as a result of the April 27, 1977, State Board Resolution.	The state department of education with approval of the state board of education. Recommendations and draft copies of competency statements and the pilot test will be prepared by a 42-member special test committee.	Grades 3, 6 and 9.	Mathematics, reading and writing.
Arizona	State board of education policy adopted: 1971 — Reading Program 1978 — 8th and 12th grade graduation requirements Legislation enacted in 1972 (ARS 15-102.28) directed to the state board of education to develop, with local school districts, a continuous uniform evaluation system of pupil achievement.	8th and 12th grade standards set by the state board of education. Year-to-year promotion is to be based upon predetermined standards for the basic skill areas established by local districts.	Local school district	Grades 8 & 12	Grade 8: Reading, computational and written communicative skills. Grade 12: Reading
Arkansas	Act 666, enacted in 1979	The state board of education is to revise minimum performance goals established in 1978 and devise new minimum standards for grade 8 by October 1979.	The state board of education through the state department of education.	The act calls for the test to be administered to a sample of students in grades 3, 6, and 8; and 4th grade students.	Reading and mathematics.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
For high school graduation by June 1981 and identification of students needing remedial assistance.	The state department of education put in motion a 3-year plan calling for full implementation of the testing program by 1981. Some of the steps in this plan include: 1. Recommendations by Committee of 100 by summer of 1978. 2. Eight regional hearings were held reviewing the recommendations. Over 2,000 educators, parents, teachers, students and citizens were involved. Summer of 1978. 3. Seven pilot testing districts were identified by the fall of 1978. 4. Pilot tests developed by January 1979. 5. Implement staff development activities in districts identified for pilot program — early 1979. 6. Implement teaching of competencies in pilot districts — by 3/15/79. 7. Test students in pilot districts (grades 3, 6, 9) — by 4/1/79. 8. Analyze pilot test results — by 5/15/79. 9. Identify remedial needs and re-teach competencies — by 5/15/79. 10. Retest remedial students — by 8/1/79. 11. Plan statewide staff development — by 8/1/79. 12. Statewide staff development — start 9/1/79. 13. Statewide competency test trial — by June 1980. 14. Test administered for high school diploma — by June 1981.	A state board policy on competency testing for special students and private schools is under development.	The state board of education adopted a resolution early in 1979 calling for the development of a plan for assessing and validating the basic skill competencies of all certified personnel in Alabama. Governor James proposed a \$13 million basic skills Instructional Improvement Program to the 1979 legislature.	In the summer of 1979, details on the Governor's "War on Illiteracy" program and the state board's competency testing program were being discussed. Some educators call for merging the two programs; others are doubtful the two can be coordinated.
Grade to grade promotion is to be contingent upon meeting pre-determined local district skills.	Information on the enforcement of these mandates by the state is not available. To assist local school district with the implementation of these mandates, two guides have been developed: 1. <i>Suggested Guidelines for the Development of a Continuous Uniform Evaluation System</i> — January 1979. 2. <i>Continuous Uniform Evaluation System Models for Small Schools</i> — February 1979.	At the 8th grade level, a Special Education Certificate of Promotion may be issued to those students who have physical or mental deficiencies and are unable to perform at the mandated 6th grade level.	Act 484, enacted 1977, mandates the state board to establish minimum performance goals for the schools of the state. Act 514, enacted in 1977 and repealed by Act 566 in 1979, asked the state department of education to report on national standardized test use in the state.	The 8th grade and high school graduation mandates were to be in place by January 1, 1978. The state standard seems to imply the use of a norm-referenced test at the local district level. However, passing grades in the subject areas and teacher evaluation would meet the requirements of the policy.
8th grade promotion is to be awarded if student can read, write and compute at the 8th grade level.				
For high school graduation, students are to be able to read at the 9th grade level.	Information on the number of students held back and promoted was gathered by the state department of education in the fall of 1978.			
Sample test data is to be used for reporting to the state board of education, legislature and public.	The state department of education is to conduct the first test sample in the spring of 1979-80, followed by statistical analysis and test revision to improve the validity of the test. In 1980-81 the revised test is to be given to a sample of students in	Special populations are not mentioned in the act.		Individual student test scores are exempt from the Arkansas Freedom of Information Act.
Test results are to				

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Arkansas (Cont.)					
California	California High School Proficiency Test (early exit) SB 1112-1972 SB 1243-1975 SB 1502-1978 Section 48412 of the California Education Code.	California Department of Education.	California Department of Education with technical assistance from the Educational Testing Service (ETS).	Age 16 to adult or persons who have completed 10th grade at the end of the semester in which the next test is scheduled.	Process Areas: Reading and computation. Content Areas: Consumer economics and mathematics.
California	Legislation enacted AB3406, Ch. 856 (high school graduation)	Local school district has final responsibility for setting standards for high school graduations. The State Board of Education is to supply performance indicators and examples of minimum standards for local districts to use in setting standards.	Local school district has final responsibility for selecting or writing test.	Test once between grades 7-9 and twice between grades 10-11.	Basic skill areas of reading, writing and computation.
California	Legislation enacted AB65, Ch. 894 in 1977 (elementary school testing).	Same as above.	Same as above.	Test once between grades 4-6; once between grades 7-9 and twice between grades 10-11.	Reading comprehension, writing, computation skills.
Colorado	Legislature enacted SB 180 (C.R.S. 22-32 109.5) in 1975.	Local boards of education may establish standards for high school graduation.	Local board of education	Test must be first administered in grade 9. Retesting must be available at least twice yearly through grade 12.	Local district option.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
be used for diagnostic purposes and not used for grade placement or promotion.	grades 3, 6 & 8, followed by additional test revision. All students in grades 3, 6 & 8 will be tested in the 1981-82 school year. The state department of education is to promulgate rules and regulations for implementation of the act. The state department of education is working on an in-service education plan for school districts which involves the colleges of the state.			
individuals passing the test will receive a "certificate of proficiency" which is legally equivalent to the high school diploma. Students over 16 may leave school with verified parental permission.	Test prepared and field tested in 1975. First administered to students in December 1975. The test is given three times per year (November, March and June). The Educational Testing Service (ETS) administers the test and scores the results under contract with the state of California.	Special provisions will be made for handicapped if notice is given to ETS when registering to take the test. Plans are underway to translate the test into Braille and large print. The test has not been translated into Spanish.	A study of the program sponsored by NIE (400-78-0111) was completed in 1978.	The test is given in locations outside of school districts.
For high school graduation.	Local testing program is to be required for students graduating in June of 1980. Sample test items and standards were distributed in 1977 and 1978. High school students were first given the test during the 1978-79 school year.	Spanish or bilingual students must take test in English. Local school districts hold responsibility for decision on handicapped.	Law calls for parent, student, principal, teacher conferences and remediation for those students who fail the test.	Examples of minimum academic standards and the criteria used for developing standards for competency is specifically required by AB2725. Ch. 473 enacted in 1976.
For remediation and grade promotion decisions at the local district level.	Junior and senior high standards are to be adopted by June 1, 1978, elementary standards by June 1, 1979. Testing in elementary schools is to begin in the 1979-80 school year.	Same as above.	Same as above.	Much of AB3408, Ch. 858 was repealed and often slightly amended in AB65. Implementation is primarily governed by AB65. A new law enacted in the fall of 1979, AB-801, would require school districts to set separate passing scores for each of the general areas of reading, written expression and computation.
The act applies to high school graduation but does not mandate local school districts to establish a program. Remediation programs must be established for students and tutorial assistance offered	This act applies to local school districts. No implementation schedule was mentioned.	Special populations not mentioned in the act.		This act was introduced and passed with Denver in mind. The intent was to establish criteria for remediation and procedures for testing. Provisions of the act apply to local school dis-

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Colorado (Cont.)					
Connecticut	Legislature enacted Sub. HB 5859 (P.A. 78-194) in 1978.	Local or regional boards of education must submit a plan for testing and remediation to the state board of education for grades 3, 5, & 7.	Local or regional boards of education for lower grades.	Grades 3, 5, & 7	Basic reading, language arts and mathematics skills.
		The state board of education is to establish 9th grade standards for remedial program reimbursement.	State board of education.	Grade 9	Basic reading, language arts and mathematics skills.
Delaware	State board resolution adopted in December of 1978.	State department of education after base line test is given.	State department of education.	Base line instrument grade 11, 1978.	Level II competencies: i.e., the application of reading, writing and mathematics.
Florida	Legislation enacted: C.S.S.B. 340, F.S. 229.85 1975. (Early exit or high school equivalency diploma).	State board of education.	State board of education. * (See comments)	Age 16 and above	5 sub-tests are included in the GED battery — reading in natural science, literature and social studies along with mathematics and writing are the subjects included.
Florida	Legislation enacted:	State board of education.	State department of education.	Grades 2, 5, 8 & 11	Basic skills: reading, writing and

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
during the school day in the subject area of deficiency.				tracts only if they establish a competency testing program for high school graduation. The law does not mandate the establishment of such a program.
For instructional improvement and remedial assistance.	The state department held planning and inservice meetings with local districts in the 1978-79 school year. Local plans for evaluation and remedial assistance are due September 1, 1979.	P.A. 78-194 was amended in the 1979 session of the legislature to include special education students in the local district and state testing program if the people responsible for student planning and placement at the local district level felt students could take the test. This determination will be an individual matter.	Early exit test for high school students included in a state board resolution adopted in 1977 was not implemented because funds were not appropriated by the legislature.	Late in 1979 the State Board of Education took action approving local district plans for implementation of the program. The state department of education has completed a "Needs Assessment" of local districts' inservice education concerns. Reporting and interpreting test results and coordinating remedial programs were high priority items.
For instructional improvement and remedial assistance.	The state department of education developed the 9th grade test specifications in 1978-79. The National Evaluation Systems, Inc. has the contract to develop the 9th grade test. Field testing will begin in the fall of 1979. Full testing will begin in the spring of 1980. Standards for remedial program support will be available for state funding decisions by the fall of 1980.			
For high school graduation. Class of 1981.	The department of education with assistance of a private test contractor developed the base line instrument given to 11th graders in 1978. Many school districts repeated use of this instrument in the spring of 1979 and 1980. Local districts must have their own promotion policy.			
For granting a high school equivalency diploma after age 18.	Testing began in 1977. In the first two years, students had a 74.3% passing rate. 350 high school students took the test in 1977 and 2,881 took the GED battery in 1978.	No mention in law.	The GED Test has been used since W.W.II by states to issue high school diplomas to adults.	The state board of education received approval from the American Council on Education to use the General Educational Development (GED) test for early exit testing purposes.
Pupil progression at grades 3, 5, 8 & 11	Beginning in 1977, the state department has developed basic skill tests.	Provisions have been made in the		The state board has renamed the 11th

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Florida (Cont.)	C.S.S.B. 107, F.S. 78.226 1976. (Florida Educational Accountability Act.)				mathematics. At the 11th grade, the basic skills are to be tested in an application mode: i.e. functional literacy.

Georgia	State board of education resolutions adopted: 1. High school graduation requirements adopted November 1976, amended December 1978. 2. Basic skills assessment for Georgia schools adopted July 1977, amended November 1978.	State board and state department of education.	State department of education working with group of pilot school districts.	Grades 4, 8, & 11 norm-referenced sampling. Grades 4, 8, & 10 criterion-referenced testing.	Grades 4 & 8: reading, mathematics and career development. Note: high school test will be developed in FY 80-math, reading and career education to be covered.
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Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
to take into consideration state minimum performance standards. Local districts have to submit a plan for pupil progression. 11th grade functional literacy test to be passed before high school graduation.	for grades 3, 5, 8 & 11, assembled a list of approved norm-referenced tests for subject area examination use, assembled local district plans for pupil progression and prepared and administered the 11th grade functional literacy test for high school graduation in the fall of 1977 & 1978. Implementation efforts are reported in further detail in two publications included in Appendix I: 1. Development of the Florida Statewide Assessment Program — A Chronology from 1971. 2. Competency Testing in Florida — Report to the Florida Cabinet, Part I. (Feb. 20, 1979)	guidelines for special provisions for handicapped. Exceptional students may be exempt from the functional literacy test and be granted a special high school diploma. If students are mainstreamed they may be included in the test.		grade functional literacy test — state student assessment test. Part I (fall of 1977), Part II (fall of 1978), Part III (fall of 1979). The court case <i>Debra P. v. Turlington</i> was decided with a ruling handed down on 7/13/79 by the U.S. District Court, middle district of Florida, Tampa division. The judge upheld the use of the test but deferred implementation of the high school graduation requirement for four years.
The state board of education has not taken final action on the use of the tests.	The state department of education has developed Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) in reading, mathematics and career education on the following schedule: 78-79 2nd grade-CRT reading & math 3rd grade-CRT reading & math 4th grade-CRT reading, math & career ed. 6th grade-CRT reading & math 8th grade-CRT reading, math & career ed. 9th grade-CRT reading, math & career ed. 79-80 Kindergarten-CRT readiness 10th grade-reading, math & career ed. 11th grade-reading, math & career ed. 12th grade-reading, math & career ed. 80-81 1st grade-CRT reading 5th grade-CRT reading & math 7th grade-CRT reading & math	Provisions are made for special students by use of the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and for remedial assistance students by allowing them to test at one grade level lower than their regular class.		The Georgia assessment program being implemented by state board of education policy is designed to support Section II of the Adequate Program For Education in Georgia Act adopted by the General Assembly in 1974. The major provisions of this act include: 1. Assurance of an adequate opportunity for each citizen. 2. A quality program which will allow personal development as well as career training. 3. A broader curriculum and a more flexible program to insure that education can be designed to meet students' needs, interests and abilities.

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Idaho	State board of education resolution adopted February 1977.	Proficiency testing steering committee under direction of the state board and state department of education.	State department of education.	Grade 9 with results available in grades 10, 11 and 12.	Reading, writing, arithmetic and spelling.
Illinois	Legislation enacted in 1978: SB 238.	Local school districts with assistance of the state board of education.	Local school districts will carry out this activity with assistance from the state board of education.	Local districts will make decisions with assistance of the state board of education.	Local districts will make decisions with assistance of the state board of education.
Indiana	State board of education resolution adopted February 1978 and amended October 27, 1978.	Standards are to be set by local school districts with assistance of an advisory committee composed of teachers, administrators, parents and community members.	Local school districts may develop their own tests based on local objectives, request assistance from the department of public instruction, or develop tests consistent with local objectives or purchase a commercially prepared test.	Grades 3, 6, 8 & 10.	Reading, composition and spelling. Social studies to be added in 1979, mathematics in 1980, and science in 1981.
Kansas	Legislation enacted in 1978: Senate Substitute for HB 3115.	State board of education.	The state department of education under direction of the state	Grades 2, 4, 6, 8 & 11.	Reading and mathematics.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
School districts have the option of participating in the state testing program. In those districts participating, students passing the test will receive a high school diploma with the state board of education seal affixed. Class of 1982.	The state department of education, with involvement of the proficiency testing steering committee and assistance of the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory, developed goals and specifications for the test, the pilot test and the actual test first used with 9th graders in the spring of 1979. The examination was field tested in the fall of 1978. The Northwest Laboratory assisted the state department of education with development of district coordination and utilization manuals in addition to the pilot and actual test.	Special education students may take the test and be provided remediation for deficiencies similar to other students. If the handicapping situation is extensive, the school principal may request a state waiver for the student. If granted, the state seal may be placed on the diploma but the test waiver is to be recorded on the student's school transcript.		Approximately 10,000 9th grade students took the examination in April of 1979. Approximately 90% passed the exams in reading and spelling, 80% in arithmetic and 70% in writing. The state department of education reports that local districts want examples of remedial programs that work.
Local districts will make decision with the assistance of the state board of education.	Under department of education supervision, the following activities have taken place: 1. Materials prepared: <i>Performance Indicators For Competency Assessment</i>. A package of materials developed with assistance of the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory to assist local districts in establishing a process to obtain and organize student competencies. 2. Workshops: Seven regional meetings were held for approximately 1,000 educators from local districts. General information on minimum competency testing was provided.	Not mentioned in legislation.		This enacted legislation calls for the state board of education to prepare procedures and materials to encourage and assist local school districts to develop minimum competency testing programs. The state department of education activities are to be started by December 1978 and a comprehensive report ready for the legislature by the spring of 1980.
To be used for instructional improvement and remediation. Local districts have the option of using test scores as a local graduation requirement in addition to the established state graduation requirements.	In support of the state board ruling, the department of public instruction has prepared an implementation guide — <i>Indiana Comprehensive Assessment and Program Planning System</i> — for local districts. This guide describes the comprehensive evaluation process and gives specific recommendations on the formation of local advisory committees, adoption of goals and objectives, test development and parent reporting.	Mentally handicapped, learning disabled and emotionally disturbed students shall be excluded. Non-English dominant students shall be excluded. Sensory or physically handicapped students shall have the program administered in a manner appropriate with their needs.		
The legislature will consider the need for establishing standards and a statewide system of	The state department of education, using a statewide assessment steering committee, developed a criterion-referenced reading and mathematics test which was	Exceptional children will be excluded from the program.	State board policy adopted in January 1978, superseded by Sub. HB 3115.	The law calls for a two-year pilot testing effort to be conducted by the state board of

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Kansas (Cont.)			board of education will develop the test and coordinate all activities.		
Kentucky	Legislation enacted in 1978: HB 578, Ch. 151.	Local districts are to develop educational improvement plans. (See Use of Standards and Test for additional information.)	The department of education is to develop and implement a statewide assessment program.	Grades 3, 5, 7 & 10	Reading, writing, spelling, language arts and mathematics.
Louisiana	Legislation enacted in 1977 - citation: Louisiana Revised Statutes 91950, title 17:391.1-17:391.0 (Act No. 621 of the 1977 Regular Session amended).	State superintendent of schools with approval of the state board of education.	State superintendent of schools with approval of the state board of education is to develop uniform system of assessment "based in part on criterion-referenced tests. . . ."	Grades 4, 8, & 11.	Basic communication and computational skills.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
competency-based education during the 1980 interim and 1981 session.	administered to a cross section of students in April of 1979. Beginning in the fall of 1979 the pilot test will be revised. Approval of new test items will be completed by November 1979; standards set by March 15, 1980; inservice orientation and distribution of tests to start on March 15, 1980 and the test administered during April of 1980. Analysis is to be completed by July 1980. Science Research Associates (SRA) developed and administered the pilot test. The University of Kansas obtained the contract to develop the second year test. The legislature appropriated \$80,000 for '78-'79 and \$190,000 for '79-'80 test implementation.	State accredited non-public schools will be included in the testing program.		education. The results of this effort will be used by the legislature to determine long range needs and programs. School districts are to participate on a volunteer basis in the 1978-79 school year and all districts will participate in the 1979-80 school year. Results of the two year test effort will be reported to the legislature late in the 1979-80 school year. The legislature is expected to study the results during the interim between the 1980 and 1981 session.
Tests are not to be used for graduation or grade level promotion. Test results are to be used for the development of local district education improvement plans. The law also contains a provision that test results "... shall not be used for the evaluation of teachers or administrators for the purpose of promotion, demotion, transfer or dismissal."	The department of education used Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS/S) as a screening test to identify students in grades 3, 5, 7, & 10 most in need of assistance. A plan is being developed which will allow local school districts to use a state diagnostic test or choose an appropriate alternative form of diagnostic test. The department of education has developed an implementation manual: <i>Education Improvement Implementation Manual for the Kentucky Education Improvement Act of 1978</i>.		The state board of education adopted a 4-year competency plan in 1977. This policy was superseded by Ch. 151. The state board resolution called for a test as a graduation requirement. This provision was dropped in Ch. 151.	The law calls for the governor to appoint an 18-member state advisory committee for education improvement. Citizens, parents, teachers and administrators are to be represented on the committee.
No student may be prevented from graduation or grade promotion.	Using a statewide advisory group, the department of education developed comprehensive minimum standards for the 3 R's in 1977 and 1978. The department of education completed the reading assessment instrument in 1977, mathematics in 1978 and writing in 1975. A comprehensive state plan is under study by the state board of education.	Special education students not excluded but test results and use of the test with special education students is incomplete.	The state board adopted resolution 7-1C on Feb. 4, 1977: "to be eligible for advancement to the ninth grade, an eighth grade student must demonstrate a functional literacy achievement level in reading" to be effective in 1980. The relationship of this resolution to the law is unclear.	

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Maine	Legislation enacted in 1977: LD 1810, Ch. 78 of the Private Special Laws. State Board Resolution adopted in June of 1978. (see Related Areas section of this report).	The one time test is to serve as a benchmark evidence. No standards called for.	State commissioner of education with assistance of a statewide advisory committee.	Grade 11. All students Grade 8. Statewide sample.	Reading, mathematics and writing.
Maryland	Legislation enacted: HB 1433, M.A.C., Art. 77, Sec. 980 in 1976 and HB 1482, Ch. 559 in 1977. State Board of Education Resolution 1977-1 passed Jan. 1977 (Refers to: mission of schooling). State Board of Education Resolution 1977-2 (Refers to Project Basic). State Board of Education Resolution 1977-57, Nov. 1977 resolves intent of board to establish graduation requirements. State Board of Education Resolution 1978-41. Graduation requirements by 1982.	State board of education. No standards required. State department of education to establish a <i>Declared Competencies Index</i>.	Maryland Department of Education (Maryland Functional Reading Test). No test specified. State department of education to develop criterion-referenced test in the basic and life skill areas and prescribe use of the Iowa norm-referenced test for state accountability purposes.	Grade 7 (Diagnosis) 9 and 12. Ch. 559: Grades 2-12 are mentioned for reading. Grades 2-12.	Reading. State board resolution 1977-1 mentions basic skills, world of work, world of leisure, citizenship, and survival skills. Also details ingredients essential to each competency. Assessment program under Project Basic includes: reading comprehension, math, language usage and life skills related to citizenship, survival and work.
Massachusetts	State board approved policy on basic skills improvement August 1978.	Local school boards.	Local school boards.	Local school districts are to assess students for basic skill competency in early elementary and secondary level.	Mathematics, reading and writing. Listening and speaking are to be added.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
For study and recommendations.	Using a 14-member advisory committee and the contracted services of the National Evaluation Systems, Inc., an assessment was made of all 11th graders and 1,000 8th graders in reading, mathematics and writing. Also included was a student questionnaire on attitudes toward school, a benchmark study to interpret test results and a public opinion survey on the high school diploma. The state department of education is now working on a model program involving planning and evaluation. The program will include sample instructional objectives, a sample bank of test items and support services. National Evaluation Systems, Inc. has a contract to assist with this process.	Not mentioned in law or subsequent state board resolution.	State board resolution adopted in June of 1978 calls for local school districts to adopt a comprehensive plan for setting goals, objectives, performance standards and an evaluation system by July of 1980.	A report to the legislature was mandated by LD 1810. As a result of this report, the Joint House and Senate Committee on Education recommended that the state board formulate a policy on competency-based education.
M.A.C. Art. 77, Sec. 980.1978: For high school graduation. Class of 1982.	The Maryland Department of Education is working to implement 2 laws and 4 state board resolutions. During 1978 the <i>Declared Competencies Index</i> was completed serving as the basis for criterion-referenced test development. The reading assessment tests are complete and installed. The mathematics test will be tried on a "no fault" basis with all 7-9-12th grade students in 1979-80. Full installation will be completed in 1980-81. Life skills tests will be pilot tested in 1979-80, "no fault" tested with all students in 1980-81 and full installation completed in 1981-82. The department of education has contracted with the National Evaluation Systems, Inc. for some part of the test development. A more complete description of implementation can be found in Appendix III.	M.A.C. Art. 77, Sec. 980.1978: students identified by existing procedures as handicapped at levels IV and V are exempt from the test requirement.		Students completing four years of high school but not passing the test may fulfill the reading requirement by: (1) certification panel, (2) taking a reading class at a high school or (3) enrolling in adult continuing education class in basic reading.
Since the policy is called basic skill improvement, the emphasis is on student assistance and improvement. The policy states: "The purpose is not to establish a new condition for promotion or graduation.	School districts are to establish minimum standards in the basic skill areas of mathematics, reading and writing by September 1980 and minimum standards for the skill areas of listening and speaking by September 1981.	Local school districts are to use the team responsible for developing the handicapped students' Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to determine if a student is to take the basic skills test.	Regional educational councils are to carry responsibility for assisting local districts with implementation of this policy.	At the elementary level, local school districts are to select the test. At the secondary level, districts may use a state developed test, a commercial test approved by the state or a local test approved by the state.

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Michigan	State board of education resolution adopted in late 1980s detailing a six-step accountability process.	No standards as such in the accountability mandates.	State department of education.	Grades 4 & 7. All students.	Reading & mathematics.
	Supporting legislation was enacted in 1989.			Grade 10. Voluntary school district participation.	(Science, health, physical education, art, music and social studies have been used in developing performance objectives and tests.)
	1974 State Board Resolution established minimum performance objectives for elementary and junior high school levels.	State board through advisory committees.		Grade 12 under study.	Life role competencies under study for grade 12.
Missouri	State board of education resolution adopted in 1976. Policy modified in 1978 to require all 8th grade students to take test.	State department of elementary and secondary education.	State department of elementary and secondary education has developed Basic Education Skills Test (BEST) for use at the grade 8 level.	Grade 8.	The application of reading/language arts, mathematics and government/economic skills.
Nebraska	State department of education requirement ruling in 1975.	Local school districts.	The state department of education developed the Nebraska Assessment Battery of Essential Learning Skills (NABLES) to assist districts in establishing minimum performance levels. Local districts may develop their own testing program.	Begins in grade 5 and continues until mastery is achieved by each student in each skill area.	Reading, writing and mathematics.
Nevada	Legislation enacted in 1977: AB 400, N.R.S. 389.015. State Board Resolution adopted Feb. 1979 — implementing N.R.S. 389.015.	State board of education.	State board of education with assistance of state department of education staff and a statewide task force.	Grades 3, 6, 9 & 12.	Reading, writing and mathematics.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
Assessment program is designed for local district use: instructional improvement, remedial assistance etc. One of the purposes of the accountability program is to identify on a statewide level minimum levels of pupil achievement in the basic skills.	The state department of education began development of assessment instruments for grades 4 and 7 in the early 1970s and first administered the assessment instruments in 1972-73. School districts and a test contractor assisted with development of test items. Additional subject areas are under study, with new assessments for all students in grades 4 and 7 scheduled for 1979 and 1983. Statewide sample testing is scheduled for grades 4, 7 & 10 in career development, health education and listening.			Legislative support for full scale testing at grade 10 is being sought. Life role competencies for high school students have been under study since 1974.
No mandate for grade promotion or graduation. Stated purpose of the test: "to identify students who may be having difficulty with basic skills. Local school districts may use the results for improving the instructional program and for offering remedial assistance.	The department of elementary and secondary education pilot tested the BEST test in grades 8, 10 & 12 in 51 of 450 districts in 1977. In the spring of 1978, 60,000 students participated in a voluntary administration of the test. Full scale testing of all 8th grade students was scheduled for the spring of 1979.	Handicapped students participate in the BEST program in a manner consistent with their written Individualized Education Plan (IEP). The IEP may specify exclusion or special testing techniques. The student test record is to note any exclusions or special testing techniques used.		The BEST test consists of 13 objectives in each of three subject areas with three test items per objective. Plans are being made by the department of elementary and secondary education to copyright the test.
The N-ABLES test is not to be used for grade retention or promotion. Local districts may use their own testing programs to establish graduation or grade promotion standards.	The department of education developed the N-ABLES test in 1975 and completed a revision of the battery in 1977.			School districts using the N-ABLES test must sign an agreement with the state before giving the test to students. This agreement calls for continuous retesting, the availability of remedial work for those in need and the use of the test for identification purposes with grade level or other promotion use banned.
For identification of students having difficulty learning the basics and for high school graduation. Class of 1982.	In order to make recommendations to the state board of education on testing procedures, the department of education appointed an ad hoc committee of teachers. This group assisted the state department of education with development of 9th grade test in arithmetic and reading. The American College Testing service (ACT) was used on a contract basis to assist. A pilot version was administered in Nov. 9, 1978, and all 9th graders were tested in the spring of 1979.	The enacted law states: "Different standards of proficiency may be adopted for pupils with diagnosed learning disabilities." Further interpretation of this statement can be expected from the state board of education in 1980.	Legislation enacted in 1979: SB 341 — appropriations for proficiency test development and scoring: FY '79-\$83,480; FY '80-\$25,520.	The state board of education has prescribed the following commercial tests: Grade 3 — Stanford Achievement Test, primary level III mathematics, computation, reading comprehension and language. Proficiency is scoring at stanine 3 or above.

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Nevada (Cont.)					
New Hampshire	State department of education committee appointed in 1977.	Statewide committee appointed by the department of education. Local school districts can set lower "interim goals" and develop plans for moving students up to the state goals.	Local districts will develop own assessment procedures using state guidelines. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) was contracted to assist with the development of a test instrument.	Grades 4, 8 & 12.	Communications and mathematics skill areas.
New Jersey	Legislation enacted in 1976: A 1736, Ch. 97.	State board of education with legislative review. Local school districts can set lower "interim goals" and develop plans for moving students up to the state goals.	State department of education, using statewide committees. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) was contracted to assist with the development of a test instrument.	Grades 3, 6, 9 & 11.	Reading and mathematics. Writing assessment under study.
New Jersey	Legislation enacted December, 1979 - SB 1154.	State Board of Education.	Local districts following state board of education guidelines for test and standards.	Grades 9, 10, 11, 12.	Reading, writing and arithmetic.
New Mexico	State board of education resolution adopted May 1978.	State department of education with state board of education approval.	Elementary level: local school districts in coordination with state plan. Secondary level: state department of education working with school districts selected a proficiency test battery based upon the	Elementary level grade level choice is local district option. Grade 10 for objective test battery. Local districts have option at the secondary level for administering a writing sample.	Elementary: Local option, coordinated with state plan. Secondary: Basic school skills in addition, life skills drawn from the APL test. Writing sample also required.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
	At the 3rd and 8th grade levels commercial tests were selected (see comments section) and at the 12th grade level a state level test similar to the 9th grade test will be developed for use by the class of 1982. The Educational Testing Service (ETS) has a contract to train 60 teachers in the scoring of writing samples.			Grade 6 — Stanford Achievement Test, intermediate level II. Mathematics computation, reading comprehension and language. Proficiency is scoring at stanine 3 or above.
To serve local districts in reporting student progress data back to parents, the state board of education and legislature. State action does not call for assessment data to be used for grade promotion or graduation but some local districts are making this a part of the overall plan.	The state department of education appointed a committee in 1977 to establish competency guidelines for local districts to use in assessing pupil competencies. These guidelines were pilot tested in 1977-78 and 1978-79. Results of the pilot study effort were reported back to the legislature and local school districts.	Each local district can handle the issue separately. Many districts include "mainstreamed" students in the test.		
For use by local districts to identify students needing remedial assistance and to design remedial programs.	Beginning in 1977 the state department of education appointed 10 statewide committees to survey teachers, administrators, board members, students and citizens and provide information to the test contractor (Educational Testing Service) for development of minimum basic skill tests. In 1978 a 17-member advisory council made recommendations on remedial program administration at the state and local district level. A special bilingual minimum standards committee recommended a native language minimum basic skills test. The second statewide test for grades 3, 6, 9 & 11 was given in the spring of 1978.	Handicapped and limited English-speaking students exempted.	The New Jersey Board of Higher Education passed a resolution in 1977 calling for all entering freshmen to be tested in reading, writing and mathematics upon entry into college.	
For high school graduation class of 1985.	By 7-80, state board of education is to develop guidelines for test and standards. By 7-81 districts are to complete plans. 9th graders are to be first tested by spring of 1982.	Special education students are to be covered by guidelines prepared by the state board of education.		
Proficiency endorsement on the high school diploma if student passes test.	The New Mexico Basic Skills Plan, implemented by the state department of education, used a basic skills task force to assist with state and local decisions. In 1976-77 local needs assessments were conducted, and an evaluation plan was identified. Field testing was carried on with some test items. In 1977-78 10th graders were given the basic skills test and regional work-			

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
New Mexico (Cont.)			Adult Performance Level (ADL) test.		
New York	State board of regents amended section 103.2 of the commissioner's regulations.	Board of regents with advice of professional educators and the general public.	Board of regents with assistance from the state department of education and advisory committees.	Reading: PEP* tests in grades 3 and 6. Preliminary comp. test in grades 8 or 9. Final competency test in grades 11 or 12. Writing: Preliminary comp. test in grades 8 or 9. Final competency test in grades 11 or 12. Mathematics: PEP* tests in grades 3 and 6. Final comp. test grades 9, 10, 11 or 12.	Reading comprehension, writing and mathematics.
				*PEP — Pupil Evaluation Program.	
North Carolina	Legislation enacted in 1977: HB 205, Ch. 341.	Does not require standards.	State department of education with assistance of the test commission.	Grades 1 and 2 criterion-referenced test. Grades 3, 6, & 9 norm-referenced test.	Basic skills to be determined by the test commission. (Reading and arithmetic used in field testing in 1977-78.)
	HB 204, Ch. 522.	Recommended by the Competency Test Commission created by law and approved by the state board of education.	State department of education with assistance of Competency Test Commission (separate from commission called for in HB 205.)	Grade 11 beginning in 1978-79.	Basic skills to be determined by the Competency Test Commission. (Reading and mathematics used in field test in 1977-78.)
Oklahoma	Recommendation by the Oklahoma Educational Council (formal body established by legislature) in 1977.	None.	State department of education.	Grades 3, 6, 9 & 12.	Grades 3, 6 & 9. Reading and mathematics. Grade 12. Life skills.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
	shops held. Full testing with the Adult Performance Level (APL) test was started in the spring of 1979. A detailed description of the implementation schedule can be found in Appendix IV.			
PEP tests and preliminary tests are used to identify students needing special help. Final competency tests are required for a high school diploma.	The department of education, working with professional educators to develop the overall testing program. In addition to the Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP), the department of education is working on modifications to the Regents Examination. Students passing the Regents Examination in English and mathematics will satisfy the state requirement for graduation. Three stages of implementation leading to high school graduation have been identified.	School principals may make special provisions for students injured or handicapped. Braille and large type versions of the Regents Examination are available. The mathematics test may be read to students. Alternative testing procedures must grow out of recommendations on the Student Individualized Education Plan (IEP).		PEP — Pupil Evaluation Program — an annual assessment in reading and mathematics required of all pupils in grades 3 and 6. Students may satisfy the competency testing requirement by passing Regents Examinations in English and mathematics. The department of education is working on a new reading test — "Degree of Reading Power" to form a closer relationship between the Pupil Evaluation Program and the Regents Competency Testing Program. This test is developed under contract with the College Board.
To be used for instructional improvement at the district level and to provide evaluative and diagnostic information on each student. For high school graduation and planning remediation programs.	In the spring of 1977, the state department of education field tested the competency testing program in grades 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 11. Based on the results of this effort the SHARP test and the TOPICS test developed by C.T.B./McGraw Hill were modified for use during the 1978-79 school year. The state department assisted with the development of remedial laboratories in local districts. Field work is underway with 65 districts for the development of competency goals. The state department is also working on policy and implementation guidelines for all phases of the competency testing program.	The state board of education may require non-public schools under state supervision to participate. The present law requires handicapped students to take the test.		
For comparative purposes by local school districts and the state.	In the fall of 1977, the department of education administered stratified random sample test (non-referenced) to students in grades 3, 6 & 9. At the same time, a sample of 12th graders using the C.T.B./McGraw Hill Senior High Assessment of Reading Performance (SHARP) and the Test			

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Oklahoma (Cont.)	Legislation enacted in 1978: SB 455 (appropriations bill).				
Oregon	State Board Resolution on high school graduation requirements passed in 1972 and revised in 1978.	Local school districts.	Local school districts.	District option.	Reading, writing and computation. Local option for personal development, social responsibility and career development.
Rhode Island	State department of education policy.	None.	State department of education.	4, 6, 8 and 10.	Comprehension, analysis and evaluation known as the "life skills."
	Board of Regents adopted May 1978.	Board of regents after receiving baseline data from pilot testing.	State department of education.		Elementary: Basic skills, i.e., reading, language arts, math and cultural arts. Secondary: Minimum competency standards in selected life skill areas.
South Carolina	Legislation enacted 1978: H 2053.	State board of education.	State department of education.	Pre-school: reading test. Grades 1, 2, 3, 6 & 8. Basic skill areas. Grade 11. Adult functional competency.	Mathematics.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
	of Performance in Computational Skills (TOPIC). This same procedure was again followed in the fall of 1978. Results were reported to the governor, legislature, Oklahoma Educational Council and school districts.			
For high school graduation. Class of 1978. Graduation requirements are to be based on course credit, attendance and required competencies in personal, social and career areas.	Since 1972 the Oregon Department of Education has worked with local school districts on their implementation plans. To assist districts, workshops were conducted and materials developed on the administrative requirements of the ruling and separate guides were prepared for "personal development," "social responsibility" and "career development." The basic skills requirements have been implemented in Oregon districts. The additional "non-basic" areas are currently being implemented.	The issue of handicapped students is under study and unresolved. Non-public schools are not under the state standards.	A joint legislative interim task force completed a detailed study of the minimum competencies graduation requirements in 1977.	The state board mandate does not ask for or give specific recommendations to local school districts on the number of competencies required for graduation. Some districts are reporting as few as 15 competencies listed for graduation while others have developed over 400.
For local district and state department of education use. A competency-based high school diploma was studied and rejected. See: comments	The state department of education has been working on a statewide assessment program and master plan for evaluation. The policy adopted to support the master plan also calls for the development of standards of excellence to be "measured by extensive assessment of advanced life skills, scholastic and cultural achievement for students aspiring to attain recognition by the regents for a special distinction along a variety of dimensions."			Once standards are set, sample testing will give state officials information on severity of skills problems, and optional testing of individual students will give local personnel rough screening data on students for whom they feel they need it.
For remediation and gathering baseline data for a decision on the high school diploma by 1989.	Implementation of the comprehensive statewide basic skills assessment program began in the fall of 1978. The state board appointed a 15-member basic skills advisory commission and charged it with making recommendations and giving advice to the governor, general assembly and the state board of education on the implementation of the basic skills assessment program. Plans were also made to field test the first grade reading readiness test in the spring of 1979.	The state board of education may develop a separate testing program for handicapped students. Students would be assigned according to the Individualized Education Program (IEP). The board of education has authority under the law to develop a special diploma for handicapped students.		Timetable for implementation of law:

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Tennessee	State board of education resolution adopted Nov. 10, 1977 created an Elementary and Secondary Program.	Secondary Level: State department of education.	State department of education.	Grades 11 and 12.	Reading, mathematics, grammar and spelling.
		Elementary Level: Local districts.	Local school districts.	Grades 4, 5, 6 & 8.	Subjects at discretion of local school districts.
Texas	Legislation enacted in 1979: SB 350, Texas Educational Finance Act.	Standards for grade promotion and graduation not mentioned. The law implies that the state department of education will set some form of standard based on test scores for state aid funded remediation programs.	Department of education.	After 1980-81, 3rd grade. 1979-80 grades 5, 9 and high school for retake.	Reading, writing, mathematics and language arts.
Utah	State board of education resolution adopted January 1977.	Local school districts.	Local school districts.	Option of local school districts.	Reading, writing, speaking, listening, arithmetic, democratic governance, consumerism and problem solving.
Vermont	State board of education resolution approved January 1977.	State board of education.	Local school districts.	Continuous. To be established by the state board of education yearly.	Reading, writing, speaking, listening, mathematics and reasoning.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
For high school graduation beginning with the class of 1982.	The state department of education worked on preliminary mandated testing activities during 1978. The Denver Proficiency and Review Test pilot was used with 4,250 high school seniors in 1977. The department contracted with C.T.B./McGraw Hill to prepare an eighth-grade test administered to eighth graders in the spring of 1978.			
For remediation purposes.	The department of education, following a conference in 1977 on the theme "Elementary Curriculum: Goals and Implementation," appointed a committee of 46 teachers with the cooperation of the Tennessee Education Association and developed a means by which student expectations on the basic skill areas could be identified. In June of 1978, a guide was released by the department entitled <i>Student Expectations in the Basic Skills, K-6</i> . The subject areas of reading, language arts and mathematics were covered in this guide.			
For state funded remedial programs.	The Texas State Education Agency will begin implementation in the summer of 1979.	The law provides that "... Any student who has a physical or mental impairment or learning disability that prevents the student from mastering the competencies which the assessment instruments are designed to measure may be exempted from the requirements. ..."		The provisions of this act dealing with competency testing appear in a portion of the finance law dealing with disadvantaged students. The law allocates \$42,900 for remediation purposes.
For high school graduation, class of 1980.	The state department of education has developed examples of objectives in the competency areas mandated by the state board of education. This information, in conjunction with staff visits to all the local districts, was designed to assist local districts in developing guidelines for testing procedures. The state department of education has also worked with nine pilot districts in giving more detailed assistance, and has also worked with state organizations such as the PTA and School Boards Association, by holding conferences and discussing the philosophical intent of the state board mandate. In the 1978-79 school year, eight districts out of forty asked for an extension of the 1980 deadline from the state department of education, primarily to work out details of curriculum and test validity. This extension was granted on an individual basis.		Handicapped students are exempt if handicap is related to the competency in question. Local districts will use the Individualized Education Plan (IEP) to assist with this decision.	
For high school graduation.	In the 1977-78 school year, school districts were asked to gather information reporting pupil progress in the mandated basic-competency areas. This information was gathered during the summer of 1978 by the state de-			

State	Action Taken	Responsibility for Setting Standards	Responsibility for Writing or Selecting Test	Grade Areas to be Assessed	Skill Areas to be Assessed
Vermont (Cont.)					
Virginia	Legislation enacted: HB 402, 1978. Repeated in HB 402, 1978. State board resolution passed 1978 (see implementation comments).	State — reading and mathematics. Local — essential citizenship skills. Skills to qualify for further education or employment.	State department of education. Local school districts.	Grades 9-12.	State — reading and mathematics. Local — essential citizenship skills. Skills to qualify for further education or employment.
Virginia		State board of education in cooperation with local districts.		Grades K-8.	Reading, communications and mathematics.
Washington	Legislation enacted in 1978: HB 1345 and SB 3026.	Local school districts.	Local school districts (norm-referenced test).	4 and 8.	Reading, mathematics and language arts.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
	partment of education from all school districts. In this 1st year of information gathering, schools were asked to verify competencies for all grade levels K-12. In the 2nd year, (1978-79), the state board of education asked that information on competency verification be gathered only for the current 10th grade class to graduate in 1981. This information will be gathered from school districts during the summer of 1979. The original state board mandate established a procedure allowing the state board to determine annually what grade levels the districts would report information on competency attainment. It is likely that the state board will change this reporting practice each year. The K-12 mandate in the 1st year was to establish base line data. The state department of education has completed a guide on the state board mandate dealing with reasoning. These guides have been distributed to school districts, and as yet, no information has been collected from school districts.			
For high school graduation beginning with class of 1981 and for planning for specific instructional needs.	Early in 1978, the state board of education adopted a resolution requiring statewide minimum competency standards and tests for high school graduation beginning with the class of 1981. The resolution also calls for the appointment of an advisory committee to assist with the selection of the examination and decide on the frequency of the test administrative period. This proposal reversed an earlier decision to leave competency-based programs and examinations to the discretion of local school boards. One of the concerns initiating this change was the fact that local school districts might be using different types of testing programs creating problems for students transferring between districts. Late in 1978 the department of education prepared a <i>Report on Public Education in Virginia</i>. This report included information on the Standards of Quality Act, including information on basic learning skills, testing and measurement, and a section on individual school planning and management by objectives.			Testing in reading and mathematics of 9th and 10th grades began in school year of 1978-79 for initial diagnosis for instructional needs and for certifying competency for those scoring 70% or above. Local assessments of essential citizenship skills and skills to qualify for further education or employment can be by means other than tests. Field testing in spring of 1978. Testing for all students K-3 began in school year of 1978-79, extended through 8th grade in 1980-81.
To measure progress of individualized students.				
For use by local school districts.	Early in 1978, the state department of education released a report on the statewide test given at the fourth-grade level mandated by HB 1345, enacted 1976. This report entitled <i>State General Report and District-Level Summaries of the Washington Statewide Educational Assessment in Reading, Language Arts and Mathematics, Fourth Grade, Fall of 1977</i>, reports both state-level and	Title I and migrant included.		

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Washington (Cont.)					
Wyoming	State board of education policy adopted in November 1977.	Local school districts.	Local school districts.	District option.	Reading, writing and computing with proficiency. Process and structure of democratic governance and free enterprise.

Use of Standards and Test	Implementation Schedule	Special Populations	Related Areas	Comments
	district-by-district results of the test given to 51,000 fourth-grade students in the fall of 1977. The basic battery of the Comprehensive Tests of Basic Skills (CTBS) Level 1, Form S, was used for this testing program. The report also includes selected results from subpopulations such as Title I and migrant students, etc.			
For high school graduation. (no date given).	Implementation of the state board mandate remained the responsibility of local school districts. The department of education did conduct a survey of local district activity in the spring of 1979. The state board of education appointed a statewide task force to make implementation recommendations by the fall of 1980.	Not mentioned in state board policy.		